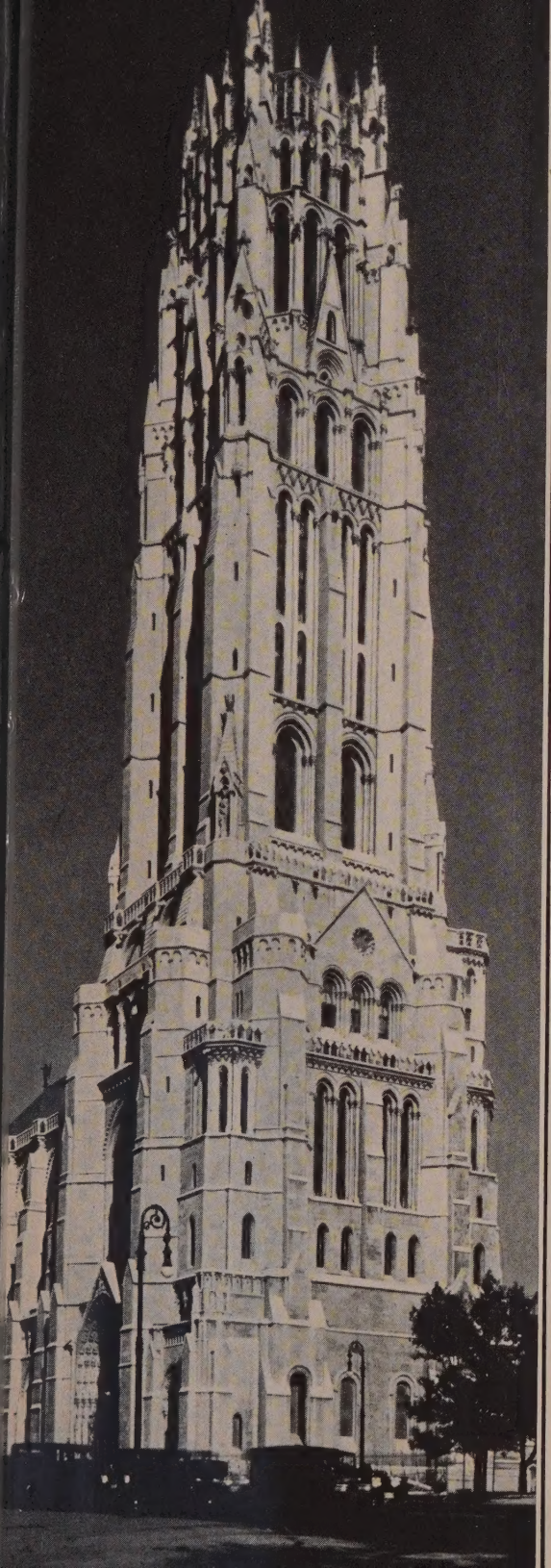

The Church Monthly

DECEMBER, 1934

On Seeming as Christian as We Are

The Movie Outlook—The Bright Side

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We need not complain that Christmas dawns on a disheveled and unhappy world. The first Christmas dawned on a world much worse than ours. Said Clement of Alexandria, in the second century, about Jesus: "He hath changed sunset into sunrise." Now in the twentieth century he can do that again if we will let him. We might begin with some friend or family and see if the Master's spirit may not this Christmastime make a sunrise out of what looked like sunset.

Harry Emerson Fosdick

On Seeming as Christian as We Are

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Every religious person inevitably faces the temptation to hypocrisy. Religion organizes its fellowship into churches, its thought into creeds, its worship into rituals, and these outward exhibitions and professions of religion can be so easily assumed by any one that nowhere more than here does a man find ready to his hand all the apparatus of hypocrisy. Indeed, an enemy might describe organized religion as an institutionalized invitation to be hypocritical. See, the enemy might say, as though with evil purpose to tempt a man you provide him with churches that can be formally joined, creeds that can be formally recited, rubrics and customs that can be externally observed, so that you put at his disposal every conceivable implement for seeming to be more religious than he genuinely is.

While no friend of religion would acknowledge that to be the whole story, yet all intelligent friends of religion, from the days of the Hebrew prophets and Jesus on, have told us that we religious people need especially to face the admonition: Be—genuinely and inwardly be—what outwardly you seem.

While that need is perennial, however, it is not today our special problem. In so far as our generation in this regard has a distinctive problem, it lies elsewhere. Multitudes now are making no profession of religion. Most emphatically they are not, so that if we should accuse them of being hypocrites, their answer would be ready. Hypocrites! they would say; we certainly are not hypocritical; we profess nothing in religion; we make no pretensions of Christian faith or practise; we are not advertising anything in our show windows which we lack upon our shelves; we are not hypocrites! Surely that is a characteristic attitude of our day. You see, there are two ways in which a man can make shift to be honest in religion. One is to make a high profession of faith about life and dedication to life and then try his humble best to live up to it. Or a man can so reduce his profession to a negligible quantity that there is little left to live up to. Either way, a man can make shift to be honest in religion, to square what he is with what he seems to be, and it is obvious that the second method is being widely used.

Indeed, so widely is it used that it may well be challenged. Consider, then, these friends of ours who say that they are not religiously hypocritical because they profess nothing in religion. Far from consenting to that, I know some such people who seem to me to be hypocrites, unintentional hypocrites, as though a man should run around the earth to get away from something and, because the earth is round, come back to it from the opposite direction. For hypocrisy, like Janus, has two faces. You can get at it from two sides. Some people are hypocrites because they profess a Christian faith they are not living. Others are hypocrites because deep within themselves they have genuine

Christianity they are not showing. Some hypocrites need to be told, Be as good as you seem; other hypocrites need to be told, Seem as good as you are.

A generation ago the principal of one of our leading boys' schools addressed a group of Freshmen entering Harvard and, in effect, said this: If I were speaking on any other campus I probably would not say what I am going to say to you. But I know Harvard. I am a Harvard man myself and I understand the sophisticated atmosphere into which you Freshmen now are venturing, so that while on any other campus, I might say to you, Be as religious as you seem, I say to you, Seem as religious as you are.

Well, the sophisticated atmosphere of Harvard a generation ago has now become general. We commonly distrust pretension in religion. We are chary about wearing our hearts religiously upon our sleeves. We reduce our professions of religion to a minimum. We think we are being honest. No, my friends, honesty is a virtue too profound to be so facilely achieved. Many of us need to square what we seem to be with what we are, in a way we never have considered: Seem as Christian as you are.

It is interesting to note that Jesus bore down on this aspect of the matter. With what reiterated emphasis he attacked hypocrisy we know. Two things the Master could not endure: cruelty and sham. We are familiar with those passages where he assailed sham, all the way from mild ones like, "Sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men," to terrible ones like, "whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

So, some one says, that is what hypocrisy meant to Jesus—it is trying to appear better than we are. Surely! but listen to the other side of the matter. What about appearing worse than we are? "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." "Let your light shine before men; that they may see. . . . " So! To have light and keep it dark, to have some radiance in you, though it be but the slender flame of a candle, and hide it, to refuse to set it out where the generation that so desperately needs it can get its full effect—that is hypocrisy too. That also is failure to square what we are with what we seem to be. I cannot remember ever to have heard that preached about. In this generation, then, with our reluctance and chariness about religious profession and pretension, there must be a lesson here for some of us—Let your light shine.

For one thing, there surely is something to be said for people who succeed in publishing their light rather than their darkness, their faith rather than their fear, their courage, not their cowardice, their best, not their worst. Indeed, even at the risk of seeming a devil's advocate, let me for a moment sing the praise of some people who have deliberately appeared better than they were. I remember a British captain in the trenches during the Great War who, when zero hour struck and he led his men to the attack, stepped over the parapet of the trench with a light mackintosh over his left arm and an ordinary walking stick in his right hand, and, as nonchalantly as though he were starting for a stroll, beckoned his men to follow. Was he inwardly excited? He must have been in turmoil. Was he frightened? Ask such a man and see:

he was fairly petrified with fear. Could any one have guessed it? I should say not. He seemed as calm and unafraid as though No Man's Land were Piccadilly. That British captain had discovered a secret about life which, exhibited also in days of peace, makes one of the noblest attributes of human character, the capacity, that is, to go down into this strange medley which is ourselves, with its mingled qualities of good and evil, and there, keeping the worst to ourselves, shutting up within ourselves the fear, falsity, and cowardice, let the best of us get out, let the light shine.

We are accustomed to stress the other aspect of the matter. We emphasize those miserable people who for an ulterior end assume the cloaks and trappings of a high profession to hide the villainy within. There are such people, the "whited sepulchres," and because they are so contemptible to honest men and women and can so easily be described as appearing better than they are, we have come to dread appearing better than we are as though it were the leprosy. Yet, when we stop to think of it, we must recall some people like that British captain, who in difficult circumstances did, may I say? appear better than they were, who, that is, kept back the fear and let out the faith so that in retrospect they shine among the noblest exhibitions of human character we have known.

Think of some of them: blind people who must have had terrible times inside themselves with bafflement and rebellion, but who so kept that to themselves and let their radiance and hopefulness and undiscourageable faith appear that we in our blue hours have gone to them for cheer; bereaved people whose real life stopped with another's death, so that their souls inhabited a lonely land, but who so kept that to themselves and translated their experience into sympathy and insight and understanding that as they grew older, even in their loneliness, they grew lovelier like the setting sun; or poor people, unemployed, hard-bestead, humiliated, who restore our faith in human nature by their outspoken faith and courage. For while this country has been going through some dark years, they would have been infinitely darker had it not been for multitudes of people who courageously appeared better than they were. I sing the praise of men and women who succeed in publishing their best.

There is an old saying much wiser in content than it is correct in grammar—Put your best foot forward. There is something to be said for that. Certainly, there is enough of the worst in the world, cowardice and despair, fear and doubt, Antichrist and paganism, so that if a man does have any light he had better let it shine.

Consider again that not only is this true in general but it applies particularly to religion. The reasons why especially the younger generation are reluctant to make any public profession of Christian faith are obvious. We are living now, not for the first time or, I suspect, for the last time in history, through a day of rapid change, when so much new knowledge has been copiously poured into our minds that the channels of our religious thinking have been flooded out and the consequent confusion is so bewildering and the impossibility of phrasing faith in the old formularies so obvious that many think it positively insincere to make any profession involving religious faith. So we get nothing from them except dis-

beliefs. All their publicity is negative. They do not think this; they do not think that—such is the total impression which they make. They market nothing but their doubts. Yet often when one converses intimately with them, when one knows them as they are, one sees that they have goods aplenty to market beside doubt. They are not adequately represented when they are called unchristian or irreligious. One often finds in them real faith, deep reservoirs of Christian character and conviction, so that one who cares about the Christian cause and about the world at large wishes he could make this whole generation hear that Harvard speaker's challenge: Seem—at least you can do that for the world—seem as religious as you are.

As this fall the churches begin another season's work one suspects that most ministers, asked to phrase their aim, would say something like this, that in a generation which desperately needs it they are trying to create more Christian faith and character. To be sure! but I suggest this morning another, kindred aim. What if we could get the Christian faith and character already existent and now under a bushel out on the stand where it would give light to all that are in the house? what if the hidden, unprofessed, reluctantly admitted, inoperative Christian faith and character could be set out where this age, which needs it, could feel its full effect? what if we could persuade some here this morning that while, of course, it is hypocritical not to be as Christian as we seem, it is also hypocritical not to seem as Christian as we are?

Consider the force of this, when one stops thinking about what he ought to do and remembers what some other folk have done to him. Some of us are unpayably indebted religiously to Robert Louis Stevenson. Now, Robert Louis Stevenson was a man who easily could have kept still religiously. He was not orthodox, not within a thousand miles! He was bound by no church; he was a conscript of no creed. He flayed the sectarianisms of his day, went through a period of youthful atheism himself, and, to the last, assailed the faults of organized religion. Once even, after watching a Gilbert Island native inventing ingenious excuses for the failure of his "devil-work," he said he "saw behind him all the fathers of the Church . . . bowed over the same task of welding incongruities."

Now, people today, holding such positions, commonly act and talk as though they were outside religion altogether. But Stevenson, who cannot be imagined hypocritically professing more than he thought, did not want, on the other side, hypocritically to profess less than he thought. So his candle got out from under the bushel and helped to illumine the whole generation in which some of us were reared. Listen to him, as he describes a walk he has been taking. "All the way along I was thanking God that he had made me and the birds and everything just as they are and not otherwise." "Thank God for the grass, and the fir-trees, and the crows, and the sheep, and the sunshine, and the shadows of the fir-trees." Listen to him as he describes how, after an aimless youth, he found his vocation: "I came about like a well-handled ship. There stood at the wheel that unknown steersman whom we call God." Hear him as in perplexity he writes, "'Tis a strange world, indeed, but there is a manifest God for those who care to look for him," or in a happy hour, "If

you believe in God . . . where is there any more room for terror?" Read those passages presenting as much of Christ as he did understand or hear him bear witness to as much of prayer as he could profit by: "A generous prayer is never presented in vain; the petition may be refused, but the petitioner is always, I believe, rewarded by some gracious visitation." See him in a dark hour when, as he said, "The inherent tragedy of things works itself out from white to black and blacker," as he cries, "I believe in an ultimate decency of things; ay, and if I woke in hell, should still believe it." You see, there is a man who does not believe everything but who is saying as much as he does believe. Such light as he had, that put meaning into existence for him, that enabled the stricken body fighting off tuberculosis on a South Sea island to sustain a spirit unconquered and unafraid—such light as he had he let shine. And some of us who remember our youthful struggle when the voices of orthodoxy had lost their power, recall with endless gratitude that voice of Stevenson, so that if one could imagine him saying, Well, I do not believe much; my faith is unconventional; I think I will not advertise it, we would cry, for our souls' sake, No! You must not put that candle back under a bushel; you must seem to be as Christian as you are!

I wish that now I could think that here in this church somebody's candle is going to come out from under a bushel and be set upon a stand.

Consider once more the essential importance, even from the standpoint of the man himself, of this commonly neglected matter of expression—getting out what is in us, so that the world may know it is there. Character, for example, is what a man is; reputation is what he gets expressed. Now, no sensible person would say that the first is important and that the second is not. No sensible person would even say that if a man's character is good he can haphazardly let his reputation take care of itself. That is a romantic illusion on which many a life has gone to pieces. No, if a man is honest, it is his serious business to appear honest; if truthful, it is his solemn obligation to seem truthful. The publicity department of every good man's life is a problem by itself.

To be sure, reputation can be merely paint which covers up an inner rottenness. But now, having endlessly emphasized that obvious fact, let us not forget the nobler meaning of reputation, not paint—polish, like that which brings out the grain in an Arizona stone log, so that the beauty which is really there is made evident. That also is part of a good man's obligation.

Deeper than this, however, is this further matter which we are drilling for now, that what we do not express tends to die and what we do express tends to live. Put a candle under a bushel and keep it there too long and it will go out for lack of oxygen—which thing is a parable of a profound psychological truth. What we habitually express we habitually confirm.

A Quaker father, so we are told, once heard his son in a burst of anger pour out a floodtide of profanity and the father said to his boy, "Keep it up, John; keep it up until thee gets it all out of thee." One respects that father's patience but questions his psychology. At any rate, if that boy should habitually express his profane feelings in floodtides of profanity, he would not get it all out of him; he would dig it all into him. What we habitually express

we habitually confirm, so that long ago men like William James told us that, when the first rush of rage begins to rise and temper seems to be triumphant, if we will relax our tense muscles and unclasp our clenched fists and refuse expression to temper, temper will die.

Here, then, is a major fallacy in much common thinking. We start with what a man is, his character, and think of his expression merely as a consequential overflow of that, so that all the lines of creative influence, as we see them, run in one direction only, from what a man is to what he gets exhibited. That is a dangerous half truth. Expression also is powerfully creative. It goes down inside a man's life, where strangely mingled are both faith and fear, courage and cowardice, lust and purity, unselfishness and greed, and there expression lays hold on one part of him, lifts that up into the light, puts it on the stand and so, uttering, confirms it. Expression, therefore, always means more than expression. It means that deep within ourselves we are identifying ourselves with one part of ourselves and so uttering it that ultimately it becomes the real ourselves.

No man looking carefully on human life dare minimize this powerful force of expression. Every young infant is a strange bundle of contradictory possibilities. O, somehow in the early years at home to help that growing child to express the best that is there, because only so can the best win! Many a youth today, misled by popular pseudo-psychology, plunges into sexual license on the basis of that father's admonition, to get it all out of him, whereas alas! such expression does not get it all out of him but digs it all into him. Many a family starts with real love but as the years pass dust gathers on love's expressions; the gracious and affectionate intimations by which love utters what it feels—these are forgotten, until the candle under the bushel goes out.

As for being Christian, I venture that many youths of this generation are not so much thinking their way out of Christianity as talking their way out of it. To be irreligious has become a conventional pose. To say, I make no pretension of being Christian, is in the vogue. So a youth expresses only his doubt. Nothing religious in him gets expression save disbelief. But there is bound to be more in a fine youth than that. Faith in life—what fine youth lacks it?—often radiant faith in life. The rich heritage of the Christian tradition has not been utterly without effect in the life of that high-minded youth, and there is within him sensitive response to many a deep matter for which Christ stands in character and conviction. Only, he is shy about that. It is his negations which he expresses. Some day you will find him an inveterate agnostic concerning whom the truth will be not so much that he thought his way as that he talked his way into agnosticism. What he habitually expressed he ultimately became.

I plead today for a nobler attitude. Let your light shine. Some of us tried that long ago. We took our stand upon the nobler side of life's hypothesis. The best we could see in life, the noblest faith we could believe about it, revealed in that much of Christ we could comprehend—to that we committed ourselves. I celebrate the lifting power of a great profession. To stake your life openly upon the highest faith you can believe, the truest purpose you can conceive, to profess it and then do your humble best to live up to it and square your life with

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Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal Spirit, far above us and yet deep within us, we worship Thee. The world is too much with us. We are distracted by its varying claims and tossed by its many winds. We would escape for a while from its clamorous noises into another and higher world where there are unity and purpose, sense and meaning, faith and hope. Clarify our minds, we beseech Thee. Give us great ideas that we may strike our roots into them and be strong when the heavy winds descend. Clarify our hearts. Let the sediment settle. Save us from the folly of vindictiveness to the wisdom of magnanimity, and let goodwill have its way in our lives. Clarify our wills, we beseech Thee. Save us from our cross-purposes and contradictory ambitions, and let some soul cry today, This one thing I do!

As we pray for ourselves, we know ourselves at one with all the souls of men. It is when we stand before the Eternal that we see of how little moment are the divisions of race and color, nation and speech, that separate man from man. Our souls are one; our deep needs are alike; our highest aspirations are the same. Thou hast made of one all mankind to dwell upon the face of the earth.

We lift our prayer today for those who forget to pray for themselves. If there are boys and girls offering no petition for themselves, happy with the passing days, making no earnest supplication for their lives, we pray for them. Our hope is in them. Couldest Thou, O Lord, lay Thine hand on one of them, he might swing the gate of a new era for mankind. We lift up in our solicitous petition the youth of the world.

If there are churches that forget to pray for themselves, complacent and content, we pray for them. Thou didst give unto us so great a Founder, forgive us that we are so little worthy of him. Shame us in his presence. Impress his portrait on our imaginations that we may not forget him, that he may rebuke us constantly and then guide us toward that day when Christianity shall possess the quality of Christ.

We pray for all governors of nations, for all who hold significant office and position among the sons of men, if they are not praying for themselves. Forgive them for the ineptitude and selfishness with which the world is governed, and forgive us, the people, that we support them in it. Grant unto the leaders of the nations wisdom and insight, unselfishness and courage, lest they bring down the temple of mankind about our ears.

Especially we pray for those so harassed by difficulty and so lost to all high and vivid faith that they cannot pray for themselves. Grant to some such today such a vision of blue sky through the gathering clouds that they may be sure again that the sun is shining. Give us radiance instead of darkness; give us stability instead of bewilderment; and set some sore-stricken and shaken soul today upon such deep foundations that though the rains descend and the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon his house it shall not fall.

Now send us all out to make good-

(*Continued on page 32*)

The Movie Outlook

The Bright Side

By Fred Eastman

BETTER movies are here! Looking over the titles of pictures scheduled for 1934-35 production—some of them already in exhibition—we find Dickens' *David Copperfield, Tale of Two Cities,* and *Great Expectations;* Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga,* Besier's *Barretts of Wimpole Street,* Barrie's *Little Minister* and *What Every Woman Knows,* Capek's *R.U.R.,* Tarkington's *Magnificent Ambersons,* Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth,* Lloyd Douglas' *Magnificent Obsession,* Sidney Howard's *Alien Corn,* Dante's *Inferno,* Gene Stratton Porter's *Freckles* and *Girl of the Limberlost,* Jack London's *Call of the Wild,* Mary Roberts Rinehart's *Tish,* William Hazlitt Upson's *Earthworm Tractors,* Irvin Cobb's *Judge Priest.* These are among the best known of the forthcoming 438 pictures. They represent less than five per cent of the total year's output, so there is plenty of room for pictures of the baser sort. But in no other year have we been able to look forward hopefully to even five per cent of the gross output.

Better Pictures Paying

The better pictures are paying! The three actors whom the industry rated as best box-office attractions during the past year are: Will Rogers, Janet Gaynor, and Wallace Beery. Not one of them has appeared in a dirty picture. Moreover, the ten pictures rated by the National Film Estimate Service as the best in quality of content all paid well, their box-office records running from "good" to "excellent." They were:

Lady for a Day	Death Takes a Holiday
Berkeley Square	Little Women
Carolina	Masquerade
David Harum	House of Rothschild
Queen Christina	Catherine the Great

The motion picture industry has recently made an effort to find an answer to the perennial question, "What does the public want?" by studying not only the gross receipts at the box-office, but the number of play dates secured by their various films. This barometer is especially significant to those interested in better pictures, because it gives more adequate attention to the neighborhood and small town theatres where family audiences and children predominate. The results of the study show that during the last three years clean comedies have had the largest number of play dates in the United States. Drama has taken second place. The lowest place on the list goes to horror and thriller pictures, which have had the fewest play dates over the period studied. Thus, whether they go by box-office grosses or by the number of play dates secured, the producers can no longer say that the American people do not patronize the best pictures.

In direction, in acting, and in photography the movies promise distinct advance. The artists in Hollywood are taking their work with more humility. The most recent testimony to this trend comes from Grace Moore, who in an interview in the New York *Times* said:

You wouldn't believe it. Hollywood has grown up. More poise, newer depths. All the new theatre personalities have done that. The demands on talent out there have developed the film people, though some of them still take themselves too seriously. But they seem more engaging, more honest, more sincere; they are less confined to their own importance. . . . Hollywood is finding it more difficult each year to retain its importance. Everybody is working much harder and more desperately. The motion pictures are growing all the time.

Code of Ethics in Practice

The industry's Code of Ethics, ballyhooed so loudly in 1930, is now actually in practice. At least the Hays office is making a serious attempt to enforce it. Mr. Hays has delegated his censoring function to Mr. Joseph I. Breen, a Catholic layman with a reputation for honor and integrity. Every picture produced by the Motion Picture Trust must now be submitted to Mr. Breen, who appraises it with reference to the industry's own Code of Ethics. Since July 15th of this year any producer who tries to exhibit his films before they have received Mr. Breen's O.K. is subject to a fine of $25,000. Mr. Hays, himself, since July 15th, has actually had the authority which the public supposed he had during the past twelve years. The public in general has been under the impression that Mr. Hays had some sort of control over the content of pictures, and that he received a salary three times that of the President of the United States in order to keep the pictures clean. The supposition—except for the salary—had no foundation in fact. Today, however, Mr. Hays actually has a measure of authority over the content of pictures.

Why? Why this sudden but welcome burst of virtue in Hollywood? Any such phenomenon must, of course, be the result of many causes. But certainly a large measure of this result has been brought about by the earnest collaboration of the Catholics, Protestants, and Jews of the country. They have been working together telling the industry in box-office language what kind of pictures they think the American people want, and what kind they do not want. Together these three religious bodies constitute about half the population of America, and (including their children) probably even a larger percentage of theatre patrons. They are not fanatics, nor puritans, nor have they conducted any whirlwind campaign under the stress of high emotion. Their leaders are simply a group of men and women who want the motion picture industry to be their allies and not their enemies in building the character of the youth of America.

Censorship Not Goal

The producers did not understand this at first—some of them do not yet. They thought they were a small minority of cranks and non-theatre-goers who were clamoring for censorship. But one may search the literature of the churches in vain for any plea for censorship. Finally Mr. Martin Quigley, publisher of the *Motion Picture Herald* and the *Motion Picture Daily*, took the trouble to find out what these religious folk really wanted. He printed what he found. He said, "They do not want the motion pictures geared to the mentality of a fourteen-year-old child. . . . They are quite definitely aware of the fact that there is sin in the world and the sinner and his sin may be treated dramatically. They do insist, however, that the sinner shall not be made to appear as a saint; neither that the saint shall be depicted as the sinner. . . . They object to no legitimate dramatic situ-

ation, provided only that when moral delinquency is depicted it is used to tell the story or to establish the character and not for the purpose . . . of presenting a lustful exhibit. . . ." That is a fair statement of the attitude of the religious bodies, although it may do less than justice to those whose aim was not merely to eliminate the harmful but to develop the socially constructive aspects of the movies.

Churches Take Action

Meanwhile some of the producers proposed to fight the churches. One of them proposed the raising of a two million dollar propaganda fund. Another blustered that he wasn't going to let any blankety-blank bishop tell him what he could produce. Another said he was going to make his pictures dirtier than ever. The churches decided to stop pleading and resort to action. They abandoned the gentle methods of persuasion and adopted box-office language. The Hays office had for years been telling the churches that the only way to get the producers to present better films was to make such pictures pay better. This would be saying "Yes" at the box-office. The churches decided that if the producers could understand "Yes" at the box-office, they could also understand "No." The churches could make the bad pictures pay less. They resolved to make them fail by the simple process of boycotting. They organized the Legion of Decency and extended its ramifications to every middlesex, village, and town of the country. They found that the average cost of a feature film was about $250,000 and that $50,000 more or less than that amount in box-office grosses would spell the difference between success and failure for the film. Fifty thousand dollars meant only 200,000 admissions at twenty-five cents. The Roman Catholics alone have 20,000,000. It wouldn't be difficult to get 200,000 regular theatre patrons from among them to stay away from a given film and make it a flop. They tried it. It worked. They struck terror to the hearts of the producers and sent them scurrying for new story material. The producers—or some of them, at least—expected that they would find little market for the better films; they really believed the public wanted the overdose of sex and crime they had been calling drama. They can hardly believe their own box-office reports that the new pictures are paying better than the old—but the facts are there and cannot be denied.

Is the victory for better pictures assured, then? May the folks who have been pleading for them and organizing for them sing a song of triumph and turn to other matters? Not if they are wise. There is another side of the story. That will be told next month.

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▽

PRAYER

(*Continued from page 29*)

ness attractive. Give us grace and radiance. May we make righteousness lovable because of what we are. Forgive us that we should ever misrepresent Christ, that the world should not see him in us. Lift us up until our religion shall sing in our lives. We ask it in the spirit of the Master. Amen.

The Riverside Church

Riverside Drive and 122nd Street

New York City

Life is like a tree; every time you get new branches you must have stronger roots. And youth in our generation has branched out. You can fairly lie awake at night and hear it branch out, into new liberties, new responsibilities, new expansions of life, springing doubtless from our modern inventions all the way from the automobile up, beyond the power of any one of us to counteract.

Now, people sometimes talk as though all this expansion and enrichment of life into new liberties were a substitute for religion and made it less necessary. You might as well talk about branches being a substitute for roots. Branches require roots. How can we drive that lesson home on our young people and on their parents?

Every summer when I go up to my Maine Island I find some trees that have blown down—too many branches above ground and not enough rootage below ground. And every fall when I come back to New York I find some lives that have broken down for the same reason—too much strain, not enough staunchness, too much modern life, not enough deep religion.

Harry Emerson Fosdick
in "Family Religion."

Sunday, July 7, 1935

ation, provided only that when moral delinquency is depicted it is used to tell the story or to establish the character and not for the purpose . . . of presenting a lustful exhibit. . . ." That is a fair statement of the attitude of the religious bodies, although it may do less than justice to those whose aim was not merely to eliminate the harmful but to develop the socially constructive aspects of the movies.

Churches Take Action

Meanwhile some of the producers proposed to fight the churches. One of them proposed the raising of a two million dollar propaganda fund. Another blustered that he wasn't going to let any blankety-blank bishop tell him what he could produce. Another said he was going to make his pictures dirtier than ever. The churches decided to stop pleading and resort to action. They abandoned the gentle methods of persuasion and adopted box-office language. The Hays office had for years been telling the churches that the only way to get the producers to present better films was to make such pictures pay better. This would be saying "Yes" at the box-office. The churches decided that if the producers could understand "Yes" at the box-office, they could also understand "No." The churches could make the bad pictures pay less. They resolved to make them fail by the simple process of boycotting. They organized the Legion of Decency and extended its ramifications to every middlesex, village, and town of the country. They found that the average cost of a feature film was about $250,000 and that $50,000 more or less than that amount in box-office grosses would spell the difference between success and failure for the film. Fifty thousand dollars meant only 200,000 admissions at twenty-five cents. The Roman Catholics alone have 20,000,000. It wouldn't be difficult to get 200,000 regular theatre patrons from among them to stay away from a given film and make it a flop. They tried it. It worked. They struck terror to the hearts of the producers and sent them scurrying for new story material. The producers—or some of them, at least—expected that they would find little market for the better films; they really believed the public wanted the overdose of sex and crime they had been calling drama. They can hardly believe their own box-office reports that the new pictures are paying better than the old—but the facts are there and cannot be denied.

Is the victory for better pictures assured, then? May the folks who have been pleading for them and organizing for them sing a song of triumph and turn to other matters? Not if they are wise. There is another side of the story. That will be told next month.

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PRAYER

(*Continued from page 29*)

ness attractive. Give us grace and radiance. May we make righteousness lovable because of what we are. Forgive us that we should ever misrepresent Christ, that the world should not see him in us. Lift us up until our religion shall sing in our lives. We ask it in the spirit of the Master. Amen.

The Carillon of Ghent

By Kamiel Lefévere

(The Ninth in a series of Articles on "Singing Towers")

"My name is Roeland;
When I clap there is a fire;
When I toll there is a storm
in Flanders."

From the midst of endless fields, a dream-carpet of matchless beauty, rhododendrons, palms, begonias, azaleas, and orchids, rises the majestic city of Ghent, "City of Flowers." Its skyline of mighty towers, dainty spires, old gabled roofs, speaking of the greatness of the past, silhouetted in deep greys and old blues, represents a sharp contrast to the colorful carpet beneath it.

Ghent, in 629, represented merely a group of dwellings built around two monasteries founded by St. Amandus. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries it had already been fortified by the Counts of Flanders and became, through its cloth weaving industry, a powerful city by the end of the thirteenth century.

Its aristocracy, however, leaning in favor toward the king of France, and its wealthy burghers, who were never docile subjects when their freedom and independence were at stake, caused many revolutions and insurrections until in 1302, the weavers of Bruges and Ghent, united in their powerful guilds, routed an army of French knights, under Count Robert of Artois, in the battle of the Gilded Spurs, when about 700 gilded spurs were collected on the fields as trophies. The people revolted again under the rule of the Burgundians but lost their rights and privileges after a five years' struggle (1448-1453).

The reign of Charles V, in the beginning of 1500, was warmly welcomed by the people but they declined to pay taxes that were squandered on military adventures in France. This caused a new revolt which was crushed. The Spanish Duke of Alva proposed to punish the people by razing the city to the ground after which the emperor took him to the top of the Belfort, showed him the mighty city, and said: "How many skins of Spanish leather would be needed to make such a glove?"

The Belfort, a powerful square tower of the fourteenth century, rising to a height of 285 feet, was altered and modified at different periods. The ground floor room, with a curious vaulted roof, is named "Secret," because in the middle ages the records and privileges were strongly guarded here in a large iron chest. The tiled floor of the room on the first floor is of a terra-cotta style of the fourteenth century. In this room and the one above are collected many objects in connection with the Belfort, the carillon, and its history.

The next floors are used for the clock, the revolving drum, the mechanism, etc., for the "voorslach," or mechanical player, and the entire carillon. A large dragon in gilded copper, standing eleven feet high, and made at Ghent in 1378, crowns the Belfort.

The carillon is composed of fifty-two bells. The first clockwork of the Belfort

THE CARILLON OF GHENT

dates from 1378. The hour and half-hour were struck on the large and famous bell, called Roeland, weighing six tons, and carrying the inscription: "Ic heete Roelant; als ic klippe dan ist brandt; als ic luye dan ist sturm in 't Vlaenderlandt." (My name is Roeland; when I clap there is a fire; when I toll there is a storm in Flanders.) This bell was once dismounted by order of Charles V after being "convicted of having played a very turbulent part with its tongue" during the Flemish insurrection.

The striking of the time was preceded by a simple melody, as a "voorslach," played on ten bells. These first bells were exchanged for sixteen new bells by Jacob Waghevens in 1543. Ten years later these bells were for the first time connected to a clavier. Ghent thus had its first carillon in 1553. This small carillon of Waghevens was replaced again by forty bells of Pieter Hemony in 1659-1660. Of these forty bells, thirty-seven are still in the present carillon; another bell was added in 1713, cast by J. Pauwels; and another one in 1749, made by Joris Dumery; and finally thirteen new bells were added by Michaux in 1913, bringing the carillon to its present number of fifty-two bells.

The Belfort was restored to its original style in 1913. A tablet commemorates the fact: "This Belfort, started around 1300, restored and finished in 1913, was inaugurated on June 12, 1913, by His Majesty King Albert I."

Robert Dierick, who has shown great and artistic qualities both in music and in painting, is one of the younger carillonneurs in Belgium and has been city-carillonneur of Ghent since 1923.

The Carillon of the Abbey of Baudeloo at Ghent

Ghent was the possessor of six carillons in 1663, according to Justus Billet, as follows: The Belfort, the St. Pieter's Church, St. Jan's (now St. Baaf's Church), St. Jacob's Church, St. Michiel's Church, and the Abbey of Baudeloo which at the present time is the Library of the Flemish University.

The famous bellfounder, Pieter Hemony, was invited by the authorities in 1663 to install a carillon of twenty-six bells to crown the great fame and welfare of the Abbey. Bellfounder Jan Pauwels added another four bells in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and in 1860 another six bells were installed by Severin van Aerschodt. Some of the bells, however, were removed to the Belfort to improve that carillon leaving twenty-seven bells in the little tower of the old Abbey.

Roeland, symbol of freedom and justice, is an everlasting watchman, and his fifty-one bronze companions still send their joyous voices over the city, in complete harmony with the old grey and the new and vivid tones of past and present.

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Spiritual Aspects of Our Crafts

By Alma C. Guillet

Thousands of young people are living in our immediate community with boxes under their beds to hold necessities, and with barely enough room to turn around. They have no space in their tiny rooms to expand and develop those creative powers which will make them more surely persons. Our church, realizing this lack in the environment of many New York young people, endeavors to make up for it through the Arts and Crafts Department.

Since but a small percentage of people are able to create through abstract thinking, it follows that most of us must create with our hands in cooperation with eye and brain. Talents are varied, so we offer in Riverside Church as wide a range of creative hand work as we are able. The very first article made in our workshop brings back that rush of pure joy that the child feels. Some express this extravagantly, and some soberly; as, "I felt like a two-year-old going home with my first bracelet"; or, "I never dreamed that I had any art in me until I made this, my first design." A young man who did an expert piece of woodcarving (his first attempt) said, with a modest grin, "Oh, it's not half bad." But he had come at odd times to work on the chance that someone would be in the craft room, and had shown throughout the long, painstaking job an eager zest that never failed.

Some of our students have so long traveled in the deepening rut of worry that they cannot shake it off, even in the happy atmosphere of the craft room. They say, "I know that it won't come out right!" We answer, "Then consider this practice. The thing is to do your best and be happy in doing it. The next article that you make will be better, and you will be growing all the time."

Our little children love the companionship of their teacher, and say whenever he is near, "Help me." Our older students at times say, "Help me," with a more jealous meaning, watching out for their rights. Others again are so self-effacing that they are in danger of being neglected. However, we are gradually building up a spirit of cooperation whereby those who have been longer in our classes help those who are just beginning, for the best way to clinch a new learning is to teach it. Others have been all their lives imitators. They have so little faith in their own creative powers that they feel that they must copy designs. "All right," we say, "as long as you learn to discriminate between a good design and a bad one, between a delightful color combination and a commonplace one." Thus the student will grow in appreciation as an art critic. Some of our students seem content, after achieving some degree of skill, to learn mass production, and make many duplicates of an article, either to sell or to give away, forgetful that the great Artificer makes no two of His creations alike.

If beauty is truth, then the home that nestles in the landscape and conforms to it adds to the landscape as truly as do the trees that overshadow it. God made the trees and man made the house. This sense of partnership is felt

by our great artists. In the museums, we strive to sense this, and we see where the brilliant Meissonier failed and the spiritual Hofmann succeeded. For spirit and form must be wedded to achieve greatness in art. Groups from our craft classes under the museums' competent guides are learning to appreciate great art. The museums also generously loan us reproductions and lantern slides.

Our students bring us examples of good designs and reproductions of paintings, which we classify for use in our classes. Artists loan us exhibits, and we have our own exhibits from time to time for inspiration.

Our students are urged to avail themselves of at least one of the various classes in sketching, painting, or design. Any craft object should have fresh, strong, original design as well as good technique. The more we use this system, the more we appreciate the marvels of nature. We make nature our teacher without slavishly imitating her.

Adult education is with us, and, while we keep step with the movement, we do not lose sight of the fact that our product, too, has great spiritual value in that it is mainly used in making our homes more attractive and livable. If a sensitive person enters the average apartment on Columbia Heights, he does not start with sheer delight and satisfaction. We too often let our homes grow as Topsy grew—a Christmas present here, a crowded corner there, an antique that quarrels with some modern furniture, and so on. Yet our physical environment interacts with our spirits and we are to our home as effect to cause. An incident will illustrate what happens when one faces this problem with enthusiasm. One of our students quite transformed her apartment with attractive articles which she designed and made in our craft rooms. She concealed the ugly radiator by a combination radiator cover and book shelves, seven feet long and exactly fitting into the space left by the entrance into another room. The next wall she dignified with a beautiful block-printed wall hanging that she made in the soft greys and maroons of her other hangings. Her lamp with its leather base and serenely beautiful shade was another distinctive touch; and so on around the room—all carefully and artistically planned for use, comfort, and beauty. She achieved in her apartment an environment suited to the personalities of the young couple who lived in it.

Another example of what can be done with little space is a young girl's bedroom which two sisters occupied. It measured six feet one inch by ten feet six inches. They had occupied a three-quarter bed in the center of the room and considered theirs a hard lot. Now, by careful planning, they were able to evolve a delightful sleeping and sitting room that satisfied their needs and was a delight to the eye. The walls were painted in light graduated tones that gave a sense of perspective and banded with perpendicular silver bands about a foot apart, giving height to the room. The floor was enameled a shiny black. The day-bed of the younger sister exactly fitted into the short end of the room, while the bed of the older girl occupied the long side of the room. A modernistic bookcase and table extended eighteen inches over the bed of the shorter girl at a sufficient height from the foot of the bed. There was space for a reading lamp that both girls could use. On the opposite side a kidney-shaped dressing table with oval mirror just fitted into the curve of the

wall between the bed and the entrance. A butter firkin, upholstered in the turquoise and silver of the dressing table and fitted with pockets inside, served as the dressing table stool. A cloth compartment-hanger in the colors of the room hung on the back of the door for best dresses, and a small wardrobe with deep drawers held other garments. The one window between the wardrobe and the wall had an upholstered box window seat beneath it. This window with its dainty rayon glass curtains and over-curtains had draw cords and pulleys to shut out an objectionable alley. With the reading lamp and the hanging light over the mirror shedding rosy light on the girls, and the dainty curtains shutting out the night, they would pile up pillows of red violet and turquoise rayon, and read their favorite books. Their bookcase, which held their books and stationery, took up only eight inches floor space. It might be added that this long eight-inch compartment was fitted with pockets for their shoes.

It was a long cry from the little drab room nearly filled with a three-quarter bed, which was still too small for the two girls who slept uncomfortably in it, to the daintiness and comfort of this pretty room, for which suitable furniture could not have been purchased in shops. Through the arts and crafts classes such results can be obtained at a minimum of expense.

Too much cannot be said in favor of a more careful study and improvement of our home environment. A profound observer has said that he can soon tell upon meeting a person the kind of home from which that person comes. We can play up to our coarser or to our finer selves in our homes. It is not only the group which studies interior decoration, but all of our students who should plan to make articles that will be a real contribution to the comfort as well as the beauty of their homes.

In a Christian church it is not enough that we think of bettering ourselves and our own environment, for there are other groups in our community who need the special help that we can give. Last winter, in cooperation with Mrs. Eddy and the Women's Bible Class, by whom was suggested the project and who furnished the means, we undertook the reconditioning of the New York Diet Kitchen at 10 Moylan Place. This is a charity that cares for the health of the babies and pre-school children in Harlem. Since the depression the rooms had not been redecorated. The two large rooms which they occupy had become dingy, with bad cracks in the walls and ceilings. We used eleven gallons of paint on the two rooms, and twenty-five pounds of plaster of paris to fill in the many cracks, a gallon of shellac to cover them over. As the rooms were high, we had to do much of the work on stepladders. Who were the volunteers who undertook this hard task? Young people and old people from The Riverside Church. Spiritual? It did not seem so in the sweat and grime of the undertaking. When the rooms were all gleaming white, with touches of warm, light yellow in the kindergarten chairs and tables, the adults were satisfied. For the children we painted a frieze running around the room the height of the dado, of scenes from our marionette show, "Winnie the Pooh." The colors were mainly yellows and tans, with touches of light blue and green. Laughter and delight expressed the children's joy as they followed the adventures of Eeyore when he lost his tail, or Owl when his house blew down, or Piglet when the flood

marooned him. A place where dread doctors and nurses might do anything to him became for the child a place where delightful animal friends greeted him when he came in the door. These murals, which we painted on beaver board in our workshop, took us the rest of the winter, but we had an ever-increasing number of volunteers to carry on the project.

It is those who live cramped lives who need the freedom of creative work most. However, we have been forced by the expense of our equipment and general supplies to charge the modest fee of $2 each semester, or half year, with the understanding that anyone who is out of a job may avail himself of a scholarship which covers the fee and a certain amount of supplies.

We do not compete with art schools, since each group meets but once a week. So anyone who wishes to pursue a craft intensively would need to register in some regular school. Since our space is limited, we have to limit membership in our classes to our church and our community.

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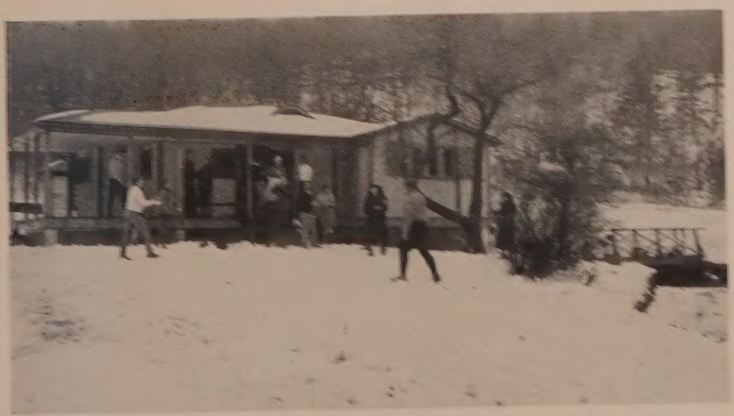
SERMON

(Continued from page 28)

it, that is far finer than to hide the light you have beneath a bushel until it goes out.

As to the pertinency of all this to our present generation—that should be obvious. We need light. Long ago the Master also came into a generation which needed light. Under his influence fell a little group of ordinary men persuaded by him to take such light as they had and put it on a candlestick. With what revolutionary consequence! I lay this challenge on your consciences and on mine. At least a man can do this much for his generation; he can seem as Christian as he is.

Dr. Fosdick preached the forgoing sermon on October 7, 1934.



WHEN WINTER COMES TO THE MEN'S CLASS CABIN AT BEAR MOUNTAIN

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IS IT RELIGIOUS?

No question is more often asked concerning institutional churches in general and The Riverside Church in particular than this one: "What has religion to do with all of these activities?" The question has been sharpened a bit by the increased interest of the tax assessing officials of the government. The economic stress of these days has forced the government to look for additional revenue and has likewise led business men to look askance at institutions which seem to be cutting across their respective fields. If meals are served in a church building the hotel and restaurant men raise a suspicious eyebrow. Well, what is the fundamental justification?

The answer is to be found in the all-inclusive nature of religion. Religion is concerned with all of life and unless it touches and influences all of life it is bound to become a thing of itself, by itself, and by so much to become futile and ineffective. Meals are not just meals in the restaurant sense when they are served or eaten in this church. They are served only in connection with fellowship or religious meetings whose primary purpose is something other than mere eating. The price charged never provides for complete expense coverage, to say nothing of profit. The gymnasium is a gymnasium, but it is far more than a mere exercising place. A play put on by the young people on Sunday evening may lack something in theater technique but it is likely to be more closely related to the drama of real life than Broadway knows anything about. All of these and scores of other seemingly unreligious interests and activities are highways into life's heart over which the church is beginning to find its way.

BOOK AND PAMPHLET SERVICE

OF

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Dr. Fosdick's Latest Book of Sermons

THE SECRET OF VICTORIOUS LIVING

Published by Harper and Brothers. Price, $1.50, including postage.

It is available on our Literature Table.

This is a volume of sermons which have been heard in The Riverside Church and over the extensive radio broadcast known as "National Vespers" which is on the air Sunday afternoons.

Between the covers of this new book by Dr. Fosdick will be found the following sermons:

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